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take the anagram to be WIATT or T. WIAT. In the case of the other two poems we may query whether second W be intentional on the writer's part, or whether the frequency of line-openings with *When,* with *And,* with *The, Thou,* or *That,* and (in lyric) with the pronoun *I,* is responsible for some of these apparent signatures.

Such a query is emphasized by reading Wyatt's epigram *To Anna* (Foxwell p. 48), in which the first four of the seven lines are initialled W-T-I-A; and by noting the first four tercets of the satire to Brian (ibid. p. 147) with their sequence A-T-W-I; also by the first four lines of the treizaine on p. 171, beginning Y-T-W-A. The second of these cases is worth very little, the poem being in terza rima; nor is there any import in the inset-initialling W-W-I-T-A etc. on p. 256 of Tottel, since that poem is in couplets. And in such a poem as the quatrains printed Tottel p. 191, the fact that the first five lines begin A-T-W-A-I is another argument for the possibility of coincidence. One hardly knows, indeed, where to draw the line between such anagrams as the long-obvious *Damascene Awdley* and *Edward Somerset* (Tottel 105, 164) and the *An Adams* of Wyatt's (doubtful) poem printed on p. 268 of Miss Foxwell's edition. Where is the frontier between coincidence and deliberate purpose?

But as for the Shelton poem and that beginning "The ioye so short alas the paine so nere," there can be no doubt of the poet's intention. In the latter the student of poetry as well as the mechanician shows his hand; the line moves with the same flow that is heard at the beginning of an anonymous poem of the Ms. Fairfax 16,—"The tyme so long the payn ay mor and more,"—and, earlier than these, in the opening line of Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules.* Compare, too, Sackville's *Induction,* line 288.

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## BRIEF MENTION.

*The Problem of Style,* by J. Middleton Murry (Oxford University Press, 1922. vii, 148 pp.). Here are six excellent lectures, which "were delivered in the school of English Literature at Oxford . . . . in the Summer Term of 1921." The titles are: (1) the Meaning of Style; (2) the Psychology of Style; (3) Poetry and Prose; (4) the Central Problem of Style; (5) the Process of Creative Style; (6) the English Bible; and the Grand Style. An analytic table of contents serves the useful purpose of

showing the argument in outline,—an outline of the details employed to elucidate the primary aspects of the subject assumed in the six titles.

As here discussed the problem of style concerns the literary artist, not the pupils in the composition-classes of the schools and colleges. The instructor of composition has few occasions to report a pupil that has acquired a true and practical conception of style. This is not as it should be, nor is the remedy far to seek. Surely the college-student should be brought to understand and to feel deeply the truth that 'writing' is self-expression. To teach and to be taught the meaning of 'self-expression' should prove a mutual delight, for that meaning is both profoundly and attractively philosophic. The teacher should persist in the inculcation of the truth that the art of expression in language from its elementary forms all the way thru to its highest forms is made valid by the observance of the same underlying principles of taste a d intellectual rectitude. The creed of the class in composition is also the creed of the 'writer' who by his art has won membership in the Academy. Buffon's famous address,—well, is not every precept and observation applicable to the beginner? Not to recall the truest of all brief definitions of style, *le style est l'homme même*, let a few of his sentences be cited: "Style is simply the order and movement one gives to one's thoughts." . . . "The human spirit can *create* nothing, nor can it bring forth at all until fertilized by experience and meditation; in its acquired knowledge lie the germs of its productions." A proper preparation, by study, reflection, and planning brings the mind into a state of eagerness for writing. The writer (seldom a member of a composition-class) "has now only pleasure in writing: his ideas follow one another easily, and the style is natural and smooth. A certain warmth born of that pleasure diffuses itself throughout, giving life to every phrase." [The citations from Buffon are according to Dr. Lane Cooper's *Theories of Style,* The Macmillan Co., 1907.]

Mr. Murry's lectures are admirably planned and composed to conduct the reader in an instructive and entertaining manner thru a survey of the characteristics of style in creative literature. He does not, one must regret, trace the highest forms of style from their true beginning in the early tages of one's training in speech and writing, from that period of experience in which the elementary teacher is expected to establish initial habits in the proper use of the vernacular art. Fundamental to a discussion of style, highly developed and conventionalized, would be a chapter on the growth of the mind in the perception of the truth that expre sion in language in all its degrees is the practice of an art in its various degrees and conventionalized forms. That the primary principle of self-expression in the true sense of style can be inculcated in early years is demonstrated by what in those years is acquired

respecting individuality in dress while conforming to approved standards. The analogy has more value than would be inferred from Mr. Murry's references to it: "Style is organic—not the clothes a man wears, but the flesh, bone, and blood of his body" (p. 136); "to judge style primarily by an analysis of language is almost on a level with judging a man by his clothes" (p. 134). Mr. Murry tends to indulge in emphatic exclusions of this sort and thereby sacrifices the inherent comprehensiveness of his subject, altho gaining in precision of definition for a less organic and more restricted aspect of creative style. For example, he contends that the issue is confused by allowing "good taste in language . . . to masquerade as a creative principle. Good taste in language will not carry a writer anywhere." The argument follows: Massinger had taste in language but "his style was generally bad," because "his way of feeling and thinking was not his own; his perceptions were blunted and clumsy." Conversely, Webster had "positive style," but "not at all a good taste in language,"— . . . "but his way of thinking and feeling was individual" (p. 137).

Mr. Murry handles his subject in a gracefully free manner. He is not restrained by the plan of a formal treatise, altho he offers material that would gain another value if put into that framework. The free manner provides an escape from responsibilities of the rigid sort. It does not so seriously warn against "the danger of talking about the accidents and not about the essentials," or "the danger of vague generalization." It prepares a broad canvas: "Style is many things"; but the law of perspective demands a fixed point of view, a centralizing tenet: "Style is many things; but the more definable these are, the more capable of being pointed at with the finger, the more remote are they from the central meaning hidden in the word: the expression that is inevitable and organic to an individual mode of experience" (p. 35). The dominant teaching of these lectures is thus briefly expressed; it is the recognition of a central meaning to a wide complexity of meanings. The central meaning adopted is developed from Stendhal's "best of all definitions of style," which is translated thus: "Style is this: to add to a given thought all the circumstances fitted to produce the whole effect that the thought ought to produce" (p. 79). This should be added: "I do not think, therefore, that there is any improper simplification in regarding the work of literature as the communication of individual thought and feeling, or in taking Stendhal's definition, interpreted largely, as one which holds good of style of every kind, in so far as it is excellent in its kind" (p. 125). In other terms, says Mr. Murry, "Style is a quality of language which communicates precisely emotions or thoughts, or a system of emotions or thoughts peculiar to the author," and inasmuch as it has been argued that prose is essentially of the same creative nature as poetry, the definition is further articulated: "Where thought predominates, there the

expression will be in prose; where emotion predominates, the expression will be indifferently in prose or poetry, except that in case of overwhelming immediate personal emotion the tendency is to find expression in poetry. Style is perfect when the communication of the thought or emotion is exactly accomplished; its position in the scale of greatness, however, will depend upon the comprehensiveness of the system of emotions and thoughts to which the reference is perceptible" (p. 71).

Style must therefore precisely communicate individual mode of experience, individual thought and feeling or emotions. The intellectual side of style, the element of knowledge or science and the enriching colors of allusion would thus seem to be adequately symbolized in the word 'thought' (defined as a general term, p. 79). But Mr. Murry does not with Coleridge consider the outfit in knowledge required to write an epic; he is not mindful of what Keats lamented in his preparation to write his best; he does not with Wordsworth find it to his purpose to observe the hand-in-hand march of science and poetry; but he does offer the challenging dictum: "In literature there is no such thing as pure thought; in literature, thought is always the handmaid of emotion" (p. 73). And "The thought that plays a part in literature is systematized emotion, emotion become habitual till it attains the dignity of conviction. . . . In one way or another the whole of literature consists in this communication of emotion" (p. 74). But is not the profounder truth disclosed by substituting emotionalized knowledge for 'systematized emotion'? The poet, it would seem, must know the things as they are before he can represent them a they should be.

The true relation of emotion to exact knowledge is not discussed by Mr. Murry, and this omission impels one to revert to the need of elementary school-instruction that may be soundly philosophic and therefore true to the principles of the vernacular art. The 'love of knowledge,' which the schools should strive to awaken and strengthen has the emotional implications of the 'mode of experience' assumed by Mr. Murry to lie at the foundation of 'true style,' of pleasurable and honest self-expression. A complete philosophy of style is therefore not attempted in these lectures, but there is a good fund of discerning criticism and a persuasive adroitness in elucidating various aspects of the central problem of style in the highest forms of creative literature.

Special attention is called to the adoption of the word 'crystallization' (note p. 146) in the last three lectures to describe what "is central to the effort after precision" (p. 88, cf. p. 95). "In metaphor we have this process of crystallization in its most elaborate form" (p. 98). This 'process' is "harped upon" and "emphasized" with the conviction that to save it from neglect or misuse is to rebuke the heresy of the imagist (p. 110). But Mr.

Murry would have deserved thanks by a summarizing definition of his new term. The term must be used to signify that the creative style has its culminations in symbols that carry the meaning of the 'thought' or the emotion to a true apex. One may venture to say that Mr. Murry's style attains crystallization when, warning the writer against a condition of society produced by "modern sentimentality" and "empty emotionalism," he exclaims "it is as though he [the writer] found himself playing on a piano whose every key sounded the same note" (p. 131). The figure surely yields a fine emphasis: "In the exasperated endeavour to get some differentiation of response out of it he is tempted to exaggerate, to pound with a hammer upon those senseless keys."

The argument is often pointed by a bit of concrete criticism: "When the musical suggestion is allowed to predominate, decadence of style has begun. I think you will find a great many examples of this sacrifice of the true creativeness of language in Swinburne, and not a few in . . . Mr. Conrad" (p. 86). Doughty's *Travels in Arabia Deserta,* "a masterpiece of prose," is "an example of a perfect idiosyncracy of style" (p. 17); whereas an artificiality becomes "unhealthy" in the later work both of Meredith and Henry James" (p. 18); these authors, it is believed, "suffered from . . . atrophy of the central originating powers" (p. 21). An excessive delight in the formal graces and intricacies of style may "take the place of the primary emotion upon which a real vitality of style depends," and that "was not seldom the fate of Henry James," who attained "an hypertrophy of style. It has a sort of vitality; but it is the vitality of a weed or a mushroom, a vitality that we cannot call precisely spurious, but that we certainly cannot call real" (p. 22). There is a challenge in some of Mr. Murry's critical *obiter dicta.* Thus Wordsworth's *Resolution and Independence* "might have been a great poem; *instead it is a great ruin*" (p. 106). Some "great works of literature are awkward and uncomfortable in their form," that is what one feels to be true of *Hamlet,* Wordsworth's *Prelude, The Ring and the Book,* and *The Dynasts* (p. 54). Mr. Murry feels "that the superstitious reverence for the style of the Authorized Version really stands in the way of a frank approach to the problem of style" He believes it "scarcely an exaggeration to say that the style of one half of the English Bi le is atrocious" (p. 135).

That the same fundamental principles govern all grades of style, of personal expression, from the elementary school or from the limited individuality to the highest art of the genius, this truth is stressed at the end of these lectures, but still not in the way of recognizing the pedagogic side of the subject called for in this notice. But these closing words have the widest application: "the smallest writer can do something to ensure that his individu-

ality is not lost, by trying to make sure that he feels what he thinks he feels;—that he thinks what he thinks he thinks, that his words mean what he thinks they mean." J. W. B.

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*Contemporary French Texts*. General Editor, E. B. Babcock. Vol. I. Paul Hervieu: *La Course du flambeau*. Edited with Introduction, Notes and Vocabulary by G. N. Henning (Boston, D. C. Heath & Co., 1922. xxi, 151 pp.). The new series of *Contemporary French Texts* will present modern masterpieces, written within the last generation. In his "Avis au lecteur," prefacing this series, Professor Babcock stresses the importance of knowing contemporary works of fiction, poetry, and especially drama. For the initial volume it was no mistake to choose Hervieu as author and Professor Henning as editor. The former was the foremost psychological dramatist of pre-war days; the latter is well-known for his careful editorial workmanship (on Dumas' *Question d'argent*, on *French Lyrics of the Nineteenth Century*, etc.). The present volume is equipped with complete apparatus: Introduction, Bibliography, Notes and Vocabulary. The Introduction, though brief, is thorough-going in its handling of Hervieu's life and character, his realism, his career as novelist and playwright. If there is a fault, it may be that extreme condensation and the desire to make a number of good points have tended rather to blur the total picture. But the important thing is that Professor Henning has written a really *literary* Introduction and the same merit attaches to a number of his Notes—that is, they not only explain matters of a linguistic or socio-historical significance, but they discuss the characters and plot, the quality of style and the philosophy of life contained in *La Course du flambeau*. This procedure is highly to be recommended to other editors of French texts. Few of these at present satisfy what is the chief interest of the intelligent advanced student—namely, to learn something about the author's material in the way of ideas and his treatment in the way of technique. Are such matters to be left forever to the initiative and resources of the individual instructor? Now that so many mature people are improving their knowledge of French, literary interpretation should no longer be largely suppressed for the greater glory of the *passé indéfini* or in order to record once more when the battle of Waterloo was fought. Professor Henning does not neglect such information, but he also —to give specific instances—discusses the motivation in Sabine's rej ction of Stangy, notes the advancing complexity in Hervieu's style, and compares his attitude regarding divorce with that of other playwrights. One could have wished that he had done even more to link Hervieu with Dumas *fils* and to demonstrate how *La Course du flambeau* is a "well-made play." For example, the

alignment, in Act I, of the two incidental mothers—one who is spoiled and one who does the spoiling—is a device of which Dumas *fils* would have approved. Few omisisons, of the annoying kind that confess editorial ignorance, are to be found either in Notes or Vocabulary. Perhaps a little more explanation of French bankruptcy and its terms would have been appropriate. A good short Bibliography adds to the value of this thoroughly commendable text.

E. P. D.

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*Wortgeographie der hochdeutschen Umgangssprache* von Paul Kretschmer (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1918. xvi + 638 pp.). This is not a new dialect dictionary, but a cross-section, as it were, of all the German dialect dictionaries. This does not mean that all the material there contained is here reproduced: this would require a work larger than Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch.* It is rather an epitome of the most interesting dialect material found in the conventional dictionaries, supplemented by data obtained by the author from his informants at various places in German-speaking territory. It is largely a dictionary of concepts and ideas, whereas mere dialect words, for which there is no equivalent in other parts of the country, have been excluded. Furthermore, names of animals and plants have only been included where special interest attached to the forms in question: ten pages, for example, are devoted to a discussion of *Kartoffel, Erdapfel, Grundbirne,* and their dialectic derivatives. *Flieder, Holder,* and *Holunder,* which do not everywhere designate the same plant, are also treated with discrimination and interest. Most striking, however, is the wealth of material collected under the heading *schlittern,* 'auf einer mit Eis bedeckten glatten Stelle mit den Stiefeln dahingleiten,' *i. e.* 'to slide on the ice.' This children's term has escaped the levelling influence of the literary language, and the author has thus been able to record and to discuss more than fifty designations for this universal sport:

schlittern, glitschen, schorren, schleistern, hackern, glisseken, schüttern, schlindern, reiten, reiteln, schlieeen, Bahn schlagen, schlickern, schusseln, zescheln, zischen, ruscheln, schindern, schinguliren, kascheln, köschen, rutschen, klennern, glennen, schleifen, schliffern, schlifetzen, schlussern, schlimmern, hätscheln, hötschen, heizeln, hälzeln, rantscheln, rieseln, russeln, tschussen, kladerietschen, tschirrn, schiffeln, tschillern, tschmidern, schuppern, schuffeln, schuben, schabeiten, scharweiden, rinnen, schlibberen, schleichen, schlichtern, tschibeln, zwiefeln, schlieren, rollen.

These instances will suffice to show that even the well-equipped scholar will find in this indispensable book a wealth, not only of information, but also of stimulation.

W. K.

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